National Military Family Association (NMFA)

Serving the Home Front

NMFA Family Support Analysis Team: The Defense Department Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

5/24/04

What we do

- Testify before Congress on Quality of Life, Military Health Care, Military Construction, Impact Aid, Spouse Employment, Military Child Education
- Advise policy makers
- Help families work the chain of command
- Provide legislative and policy initiative information through newsletter, web site (www.nmfa.org), fact sheets, spouse club “e-news”
- **New!!** Weekly Legislative Email news (sign up on NMFA website)
- When funded, travel to installations to view family programs, brief commanders and family members
- NMFA volunteer Representatives serve as “eyes and ears” in military communities.

Where We Represent Military Families

- DeCA Patron Council
- DoD/Service Working Groups:
  - Army Education Working Group
  - DoD/Service Financial Literacy Working Group
  - TRICARE Beneficiary Panel
  - Joint Family Readiness Working Group
- TRICARE Contractor Association Advisory Councils
- Federal Advisory Panels
- The Military Coalition
- NMFA Reps participate in installation advisory groups and councils

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- “After-Actions” are standard NMFA practice
- Wanted to compile research regarding best practices, gaps in family support, roles of non-profits and civilian community organizations
- Funding provided by Sears
- Comprehensive examination included all Services for both active duty and reserve components
- Published analysis will provide recommendations on how to meet the needs of military families during future military operations
- Distribution will reach law makers, executive departments, individual Services, installations, military organizations and all other interested parties

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- Organization

- Methodology
  - Survey
  - Focus Groups
  - Questionnaires for family support providers
  - Interviews
  - Periodical Resources

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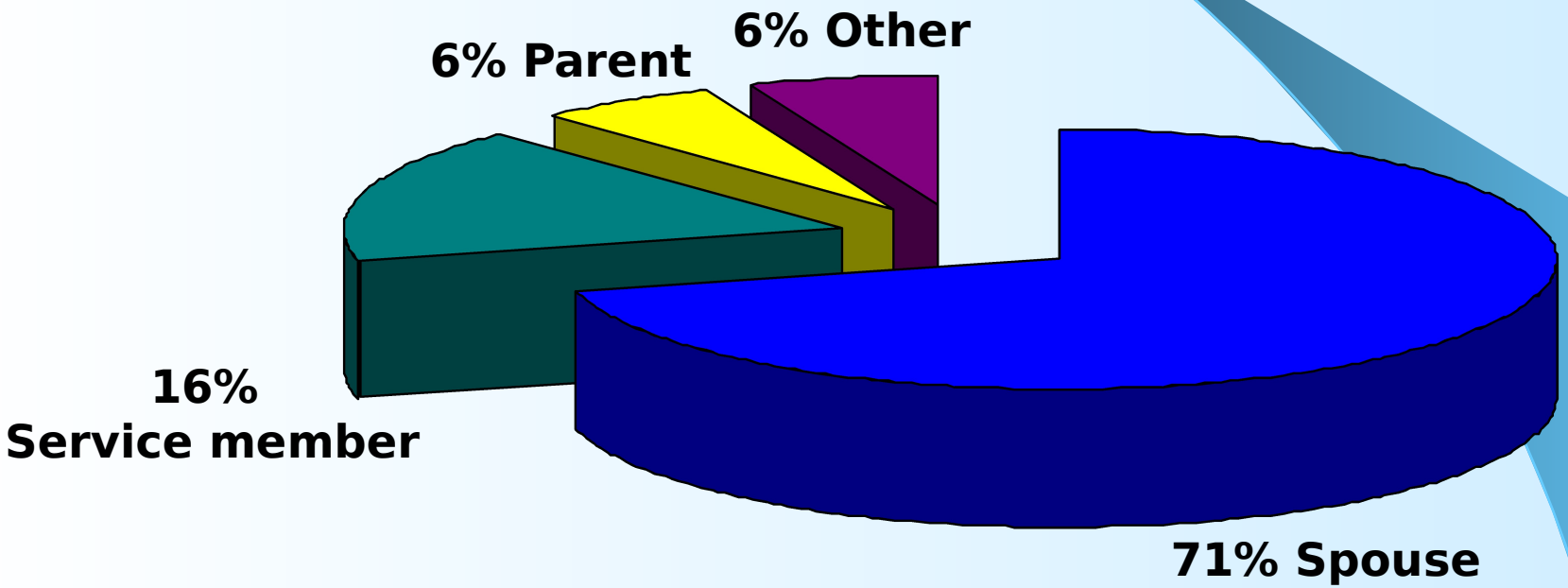
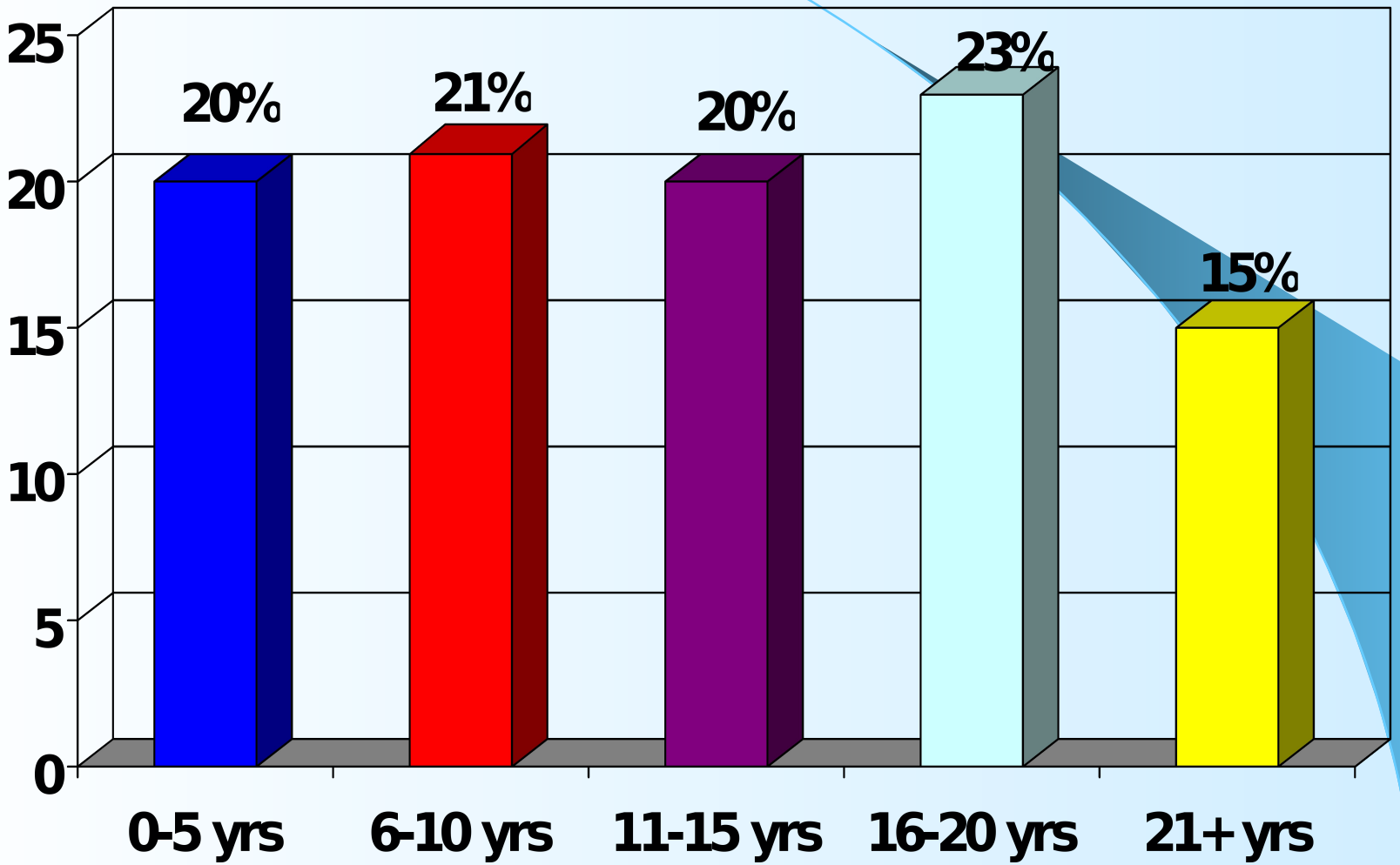
Demographic Information

Affiliation to the Military



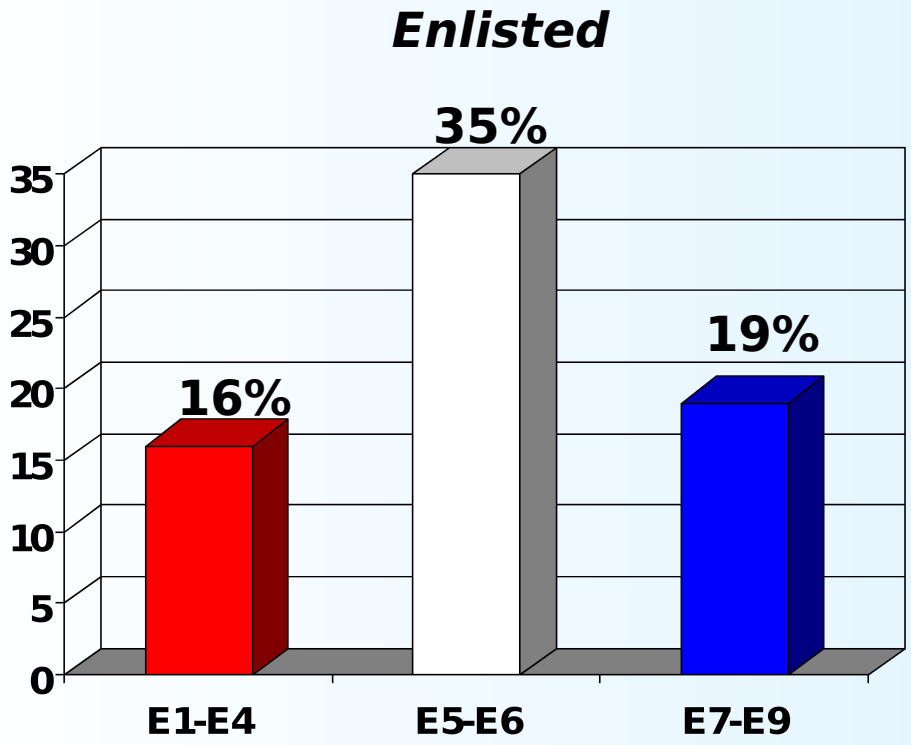
*Source: Total demographics for NMFA web survey and focus groups conducted Feb-Mar 2004

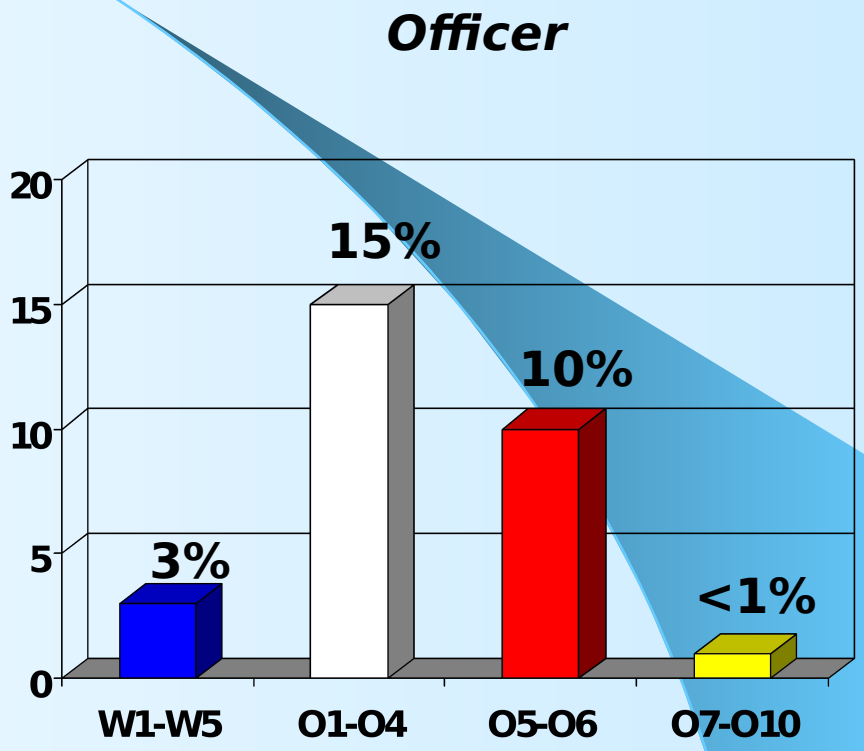
Years of Service



**Source: Total demographics for NMFA web survey and focus groups conducted Feb-Mar 2004*

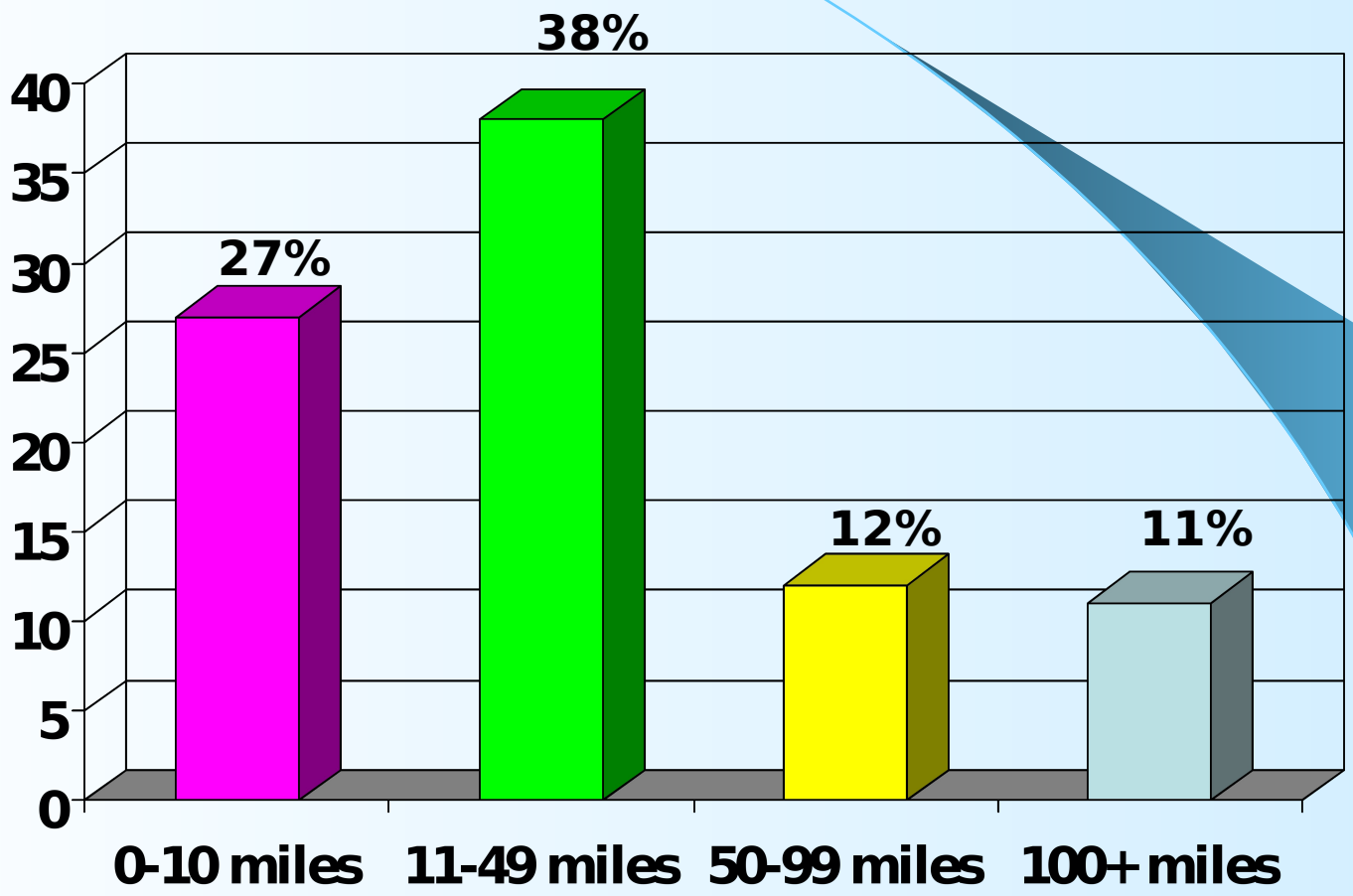
Rank of Servicemember





*Source: Total demographics for NMFA web survey and focus groups conducted Feb-Mar 2004

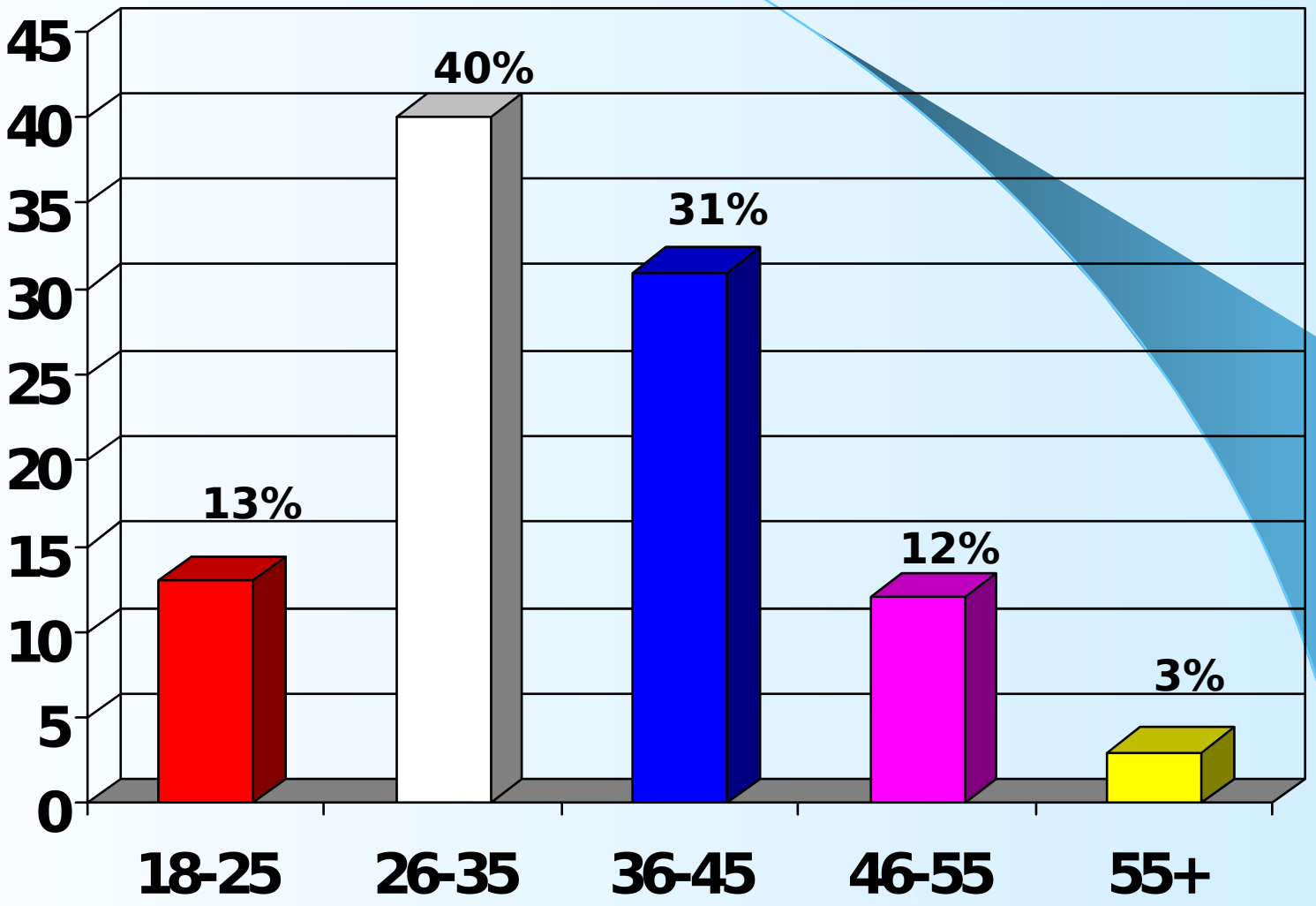
Distance from installation



78% of respondents DO NOT live on an installation

**Source: Total demographics for NMFA web survey and focus groups conducted Feb-Mar 2004*

Age of Respondents



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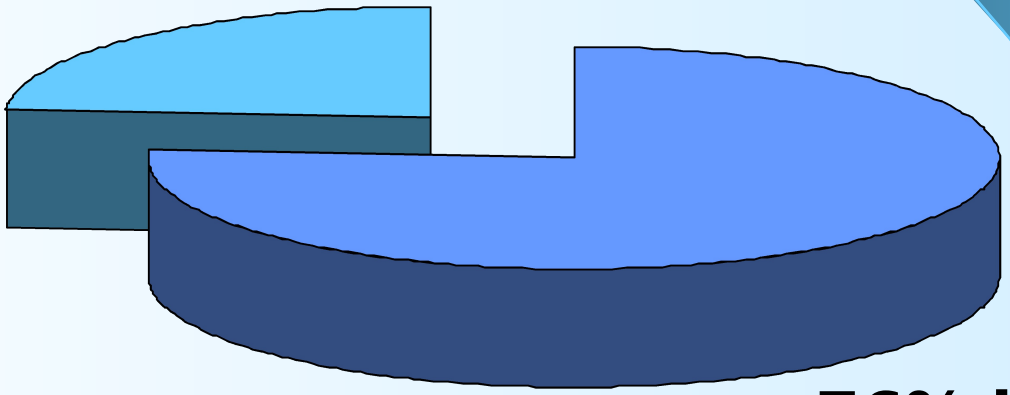
Dependent Children

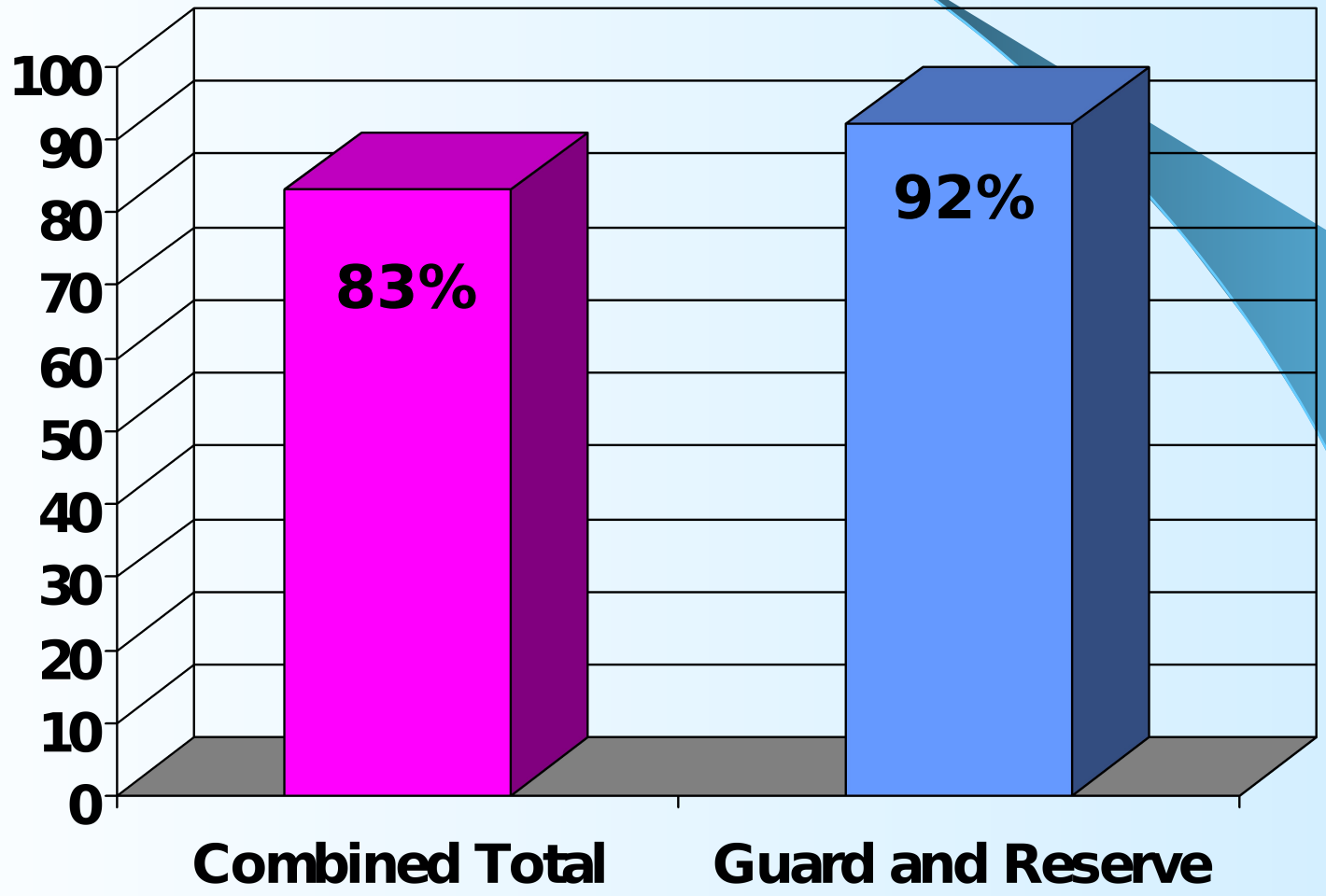
24% do not have dependent children



76% have dependent children

**Source: Total demographics for NMFA web survey and focus groups conducted Feb-Mar 2004*

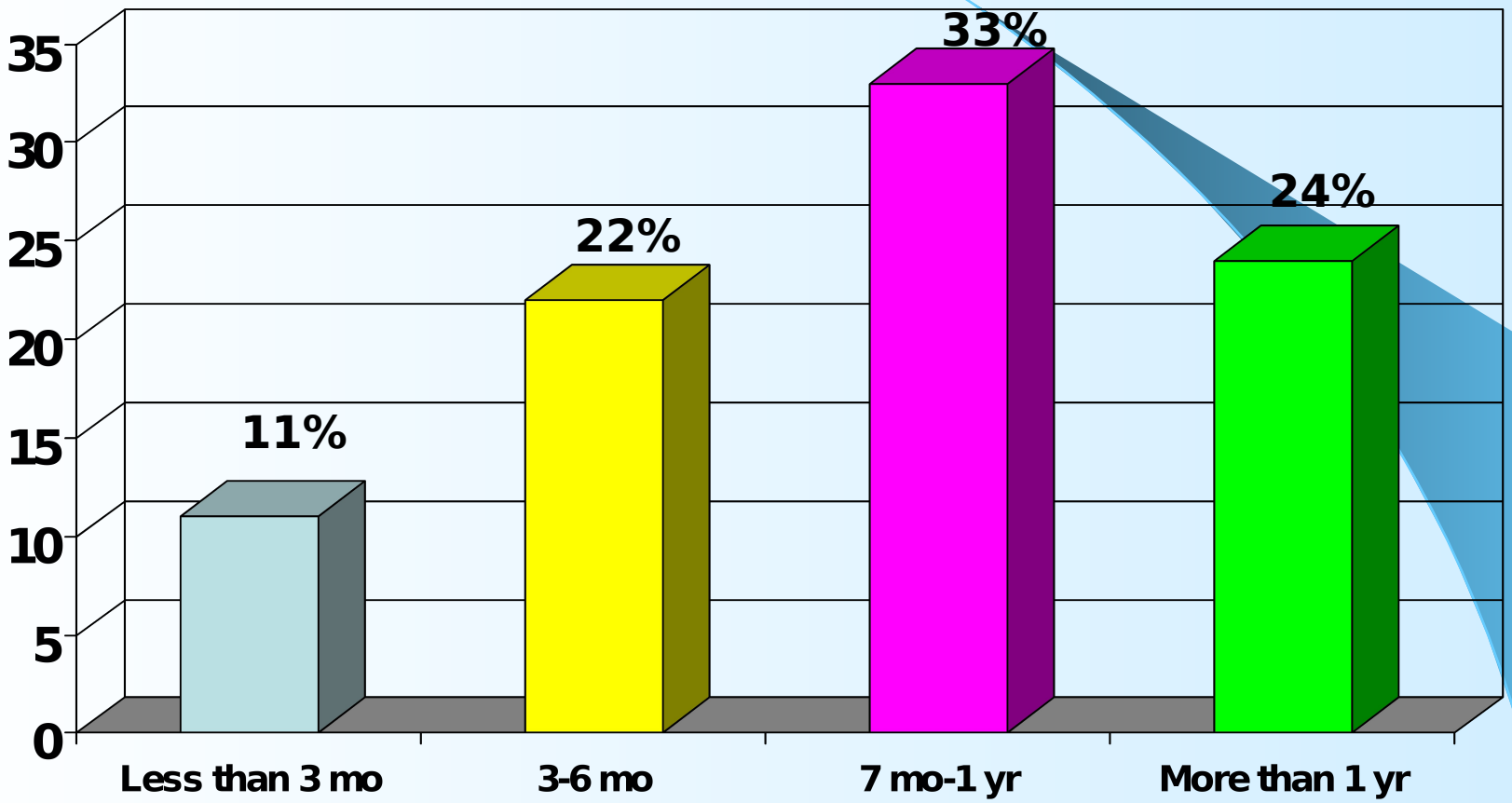
On assignment, deployed or mobilized at least once since 9/11



*Source: Total demographics for NMFA web survey only conducted Feb-Mar 2004

Total time deployed or mobilized

since 9/11



**Source: Total demographics for NMFA web survey only conducted Feb-Mar 2004*

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Conclusions

1. Communication
   - The total commitment to broad-based, proactive communication flowing from and between the command, family support providers, and family members is the key to ensuring the overarching coordination of programs needed to support military families during deployments.

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Conclusions

2. Training

- Standardized, continuous training is needed at all levels—from commanders and their representatives, to those providing the support, and to the family members themselves—to ensure programs are working and services are consistent and utilized.

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Conclusions

3. Partnerships
   - Strong partnerships among and between military and community agencies are essential in ensuring family and servicemember access to programs and services that meet needs arising from the unique challenges posed by deployments.

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Conclusions

4. Community Support

- The outpouring of community spirit, good will and resources fills critical gaps in military family support services for all military families, but especially for isolated families and non-ID card holders.

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- Other Significant Challenges
  - Child care
  - Mental health services
  - Finance/Legal (powers of attorney)

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- Why do we need more research?
  - Continuous cycle of pre-deployment, deployment, and reunion
  - After the reunion (6 months, 1 year later)
  - Successful reintegration process

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Questions?